

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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USIAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: IBADAN BOOK CONFERENCE-EXHIBIT

REF: USIA 24929, ETC.

USIA FOR IAA AND ICS; STATE FOR CU/AF

1. AWAITING ARRIVAL LATTANZI-LAGE PAPER BEFORE MAKING FINAL
DECISION ON CONFERENCE-EXHIBIT ALTERNATIVES.

2. IN VIEW (A) WEAK SUPPORT FROM AMERICAN PUBLISHERS AND BOOK-
SELLERS EVIDENCED BY FAILURE TO SUPPLY FUNDING FOR TRAVEL
COSTS OF AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS AND SUPPORT COSTS, (B) CONFUSED
HIP-SHOOTING MANNER IN WHICH BAENSCH HAS ATTEMPTED ORGANIZE
PROJECT, AND (C) LACK OF FOCUS ON WHAT WE REGARD AS MAJOR
PROBLEM, I.E. MAKING IT EASY FOR NIGERIANS TO PURCHASE AMERICAN
BOOKS, WE CANNOT JUSTIFY EARMARKING SOME 10 AMSPEC GRANTS AND
PROVIDING ESTIMATED \$15-\$25,000 IN GOE NECESSARY TO COVER
PROJECT COSTS.

3. PURPOSE OF PROJECT IS MOST LAUDABLE. POST GIVES
HIGH PRIORITY TO PROMOTION OF AMERICAN BOOK SALES BOTH IN ORDER
HELP OFFSET US PAYMENTS DEFICIT WITH NIGERIA AND TO INCREASE
AMERICAN INFLUENCE HERE. AS WE HAVE STATED BEFORE, THERE IS A
GREAT DEAL OF INTEREST IN AMERICAN BOOKS-PARTICULARLY COLLEGE-
LEVEL TEXTBOOKS AND TECHNICAL WORKS. PROBLEM CONTINUES TO BE
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PRIMARILY LACK OF SYSTEM WHEREBY NIGERIANS CAN FIND OUT WHAT

BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE AND READILY ORDER THEM IN QUANTITY. PARTIAL SOLUTION IS SUGGESTED BY HMG-SUPPORTED LONDON CLEARINGHOUSE FOR AFRICAN BOOK-ORDERS. I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN DETAILS OF THAT OPERATION-EITHER HERE OR DURING BRIEF LONDON VISIT IN MAY. CRUX OF PROBLEM SEEMS TO LIE IN LONG-STANDING CARTEL MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS

BETWEEN BRITISH AND AMERICAN PUBLISHERS WHICH CEDE DISTRIBUTION RIGHTS IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICA TO BRITISH BOOKSELLERS. WOULD APPRECIATE STATUS REPORT ON RELEVANT ANTI-TRUST SUIT CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS. QUESTION WHETHER AMERICAN PUBLISHERS WILL BE INTERESTED IN MAKING MAJOR EFFORT PROMOTE THEIR PRODUCTS IN NIGERIA UNTIL THAT SUIT IS RESOLVED. WOULD SEEM WASTE OF AGENCY RESOURCES TO PROMOTE BOOK SALES HERE UNTIL AMERICAN PUBLISHERS ARE WILLING AND ABLE MAKE MAJOR FOLLOW-UP EFFORTS. IN PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS, WE BELIEVE A SUCCESSFUL BOOK CONFERENCE-EXHIBIT AIMED AT STIMULATING ALREADY SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST HERE IN AMERICAN BOOKS WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE SINCE THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT PRACTICAL MEANS WILL BE DEvised IN NEAR FUTURE TO SATISFY EXISTING AND GENERATED DEMANDS.

4. AS HAVE SUGGESTED PREVIOUSLY, POST COULD ACT-AT LEAST TEMPORARILY-AS CENTRAL AGENT TO RECEIVE NIGERIAN BOOK ORDERS, PROVIDED AGENCY OKAYED IDEA AND SUPPLIED NECESSARY SUPPORT. BUT SUCH INITIATIVE WOULD FAIL UNLESS AN AMERICAN CLEARINGHOUSE ARRANGEMENT EXISTED WHICH COULD DEAL CENTRALLY WITH ORDERS TRANSMITTED FROM POST.

5. IMMEDIATE PROBLEM IS DISPOSITION OF BOOKS SHIPPED FOR IBADAN CONFERENCE-EXHIBIT. BEST SOLUTION WE ENVISAGE IS PRESENTATION OF THOSE BOOKS TO NIGERIAN UNIVERSITYIES ON BEHALF OF AMERICAN PUBLISHERS.

6. FORWARDING COPIES LATEST LETTER RECEIVED FROM BAENSCH INCLUDING LETTER TO HIM FROM KEY MEMBER OF NIGERIAL PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION WHICH STATES THAT IBADAN CONFERENCE HAS BEEN ORGANIZED IN HIGH-HANDED MANNER "PUTTING THE PIG BEFORE THE CASSAVA...."
HEDGES

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